

THE
MYSTERIE OF
CHRISTES
NATIVITIE.

A Sermon Preached in the Parish
Church of ALL-SAINTS in DOR-
CHESTER, *within the Countie*
of DORSET, the 25. day of December
1613. being CHRISTMAS
DAYE.

By WILLIAM JONES, Master of Arts, and
Preacher of Gods Word.

BERNARD.

*Puto me iam sperare non poterit Christus,
Ois de offitio meo, & caro de carne mea.*

How is it possible that the blessed Sonne of God should so related me, his people,
our sinne vpon him, he is become both of my flesh and bone of my bone.



L O N D O N.

Printed for Richard Horthius, and are to be sold at his Shop
in Chancery-lane, neere Sericis Inn.

1614.

THE
MYSTERY OF
CHRIST'S
NATIVITY

A Sermon Preached in the Parish

Church of St. Martin in the

CHURCH, within the County

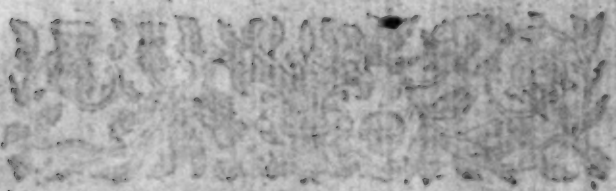
of Dorset, the 27. day of December

1813, by CHURCHMAN

D. D. E.




Printed for Richard H. & Co. at the
Old Printing Office, in the Strand.
How is possible that the blessed Son of God should now visit me? This is
an answer to the question, 'Is it become flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone?'



LONDON

Printed for Richard H. & Co. and are to be sold at his shop
in Chancery-lane, near St. Dunstons Church.
1814.



To the Worshipfull M. THOMAS
 HUSSY *Justice of Peace*, Master
 IASPER MELLER Esquire, Master
 LAURENCE MELLER, M. THO. PAWLET,
 M. Mathew Chubb, M. Richard Blachford, and M.
 THOMAS BLACHFORD, Gentlemen of
 Dorset-shire, my especiall kind and louing
 friends, Grace and Peace bee multi-
 plied through Christ Iesus
 our LORD.



As the preaching of the
 Gospell of Christ was not,
 nor is, the least gift of
 grace that God gaue vnto
 his Church; but euen the
 greatest miracle that euer
 Christ wrought heere on
 earth for our Conuersion
 vnto the^r faith: So the^r Math. 11. 6.
 abuse of this grace is not
 the least, but the greatest
 sinne, that can be committed. The which being truly consi-
 dered,

A. 2.

The Epistle

3. Ep. 1oh. v. 9.

Act. 8. 18.

Matth. 26. 15.

dered; I maruell not a little? why Diotrephes with his Schollers will persist in resisting of this grace; or Simon Magus with his Champions continue in purchasing of this grace; or Iudas with his Successors perseuer in buying and selling of Christ Spouse the Church, contrarie to the Gospellof grace. But forasmuch as that I minde not in this ensuing Treatise to tax them, or their wicked abuses: Yet my prayers vnto God for them shalbee; to turne their hearts from farther renting of the garments of Christ and his Church, least they become like vnto these their predecessors, partakers not of the least grace.

The subiect or matter, wherewith I am now to present your Worships withall: is touching the mysterie of Christ his Natiuitie. The Text hath beene handled often, and by manie; Tea and of such men, who for their great understanding, reading, wittie inuention, and profound Iudgement, haue manie degrees exceeded my selfe. Yet to satisfie the earnest and godly requests of some of my especiall good friends, I haue enterprised, and aduentured, to set forth the same in print: hoping that your Worshippes will vouchsafe to giue it the perusall, and accept these the first fruits of my labours, with the selfe-same affection wherewith it is offered; how smal and simple soeuer it seeme to be. And now the Lord Iesus giue it his grace, that it may not be like fire kinled on his Altar in vaine; but that it may proue to bee as the morning Incense, and as euening Sacrifice, acceptable vnto God, and profitable vnto this Church.

Mal. 1. 9.

Vnto the same God will I pray alwayes to powre downe
his

Dedicatorie.

*his mercies vpon you, to enrich you with his graces,
and to preserue your Worshipps for the good
both of Church and Common-wealth,
vnto his glorie*

AMEN:

Your worshipps to be commanded

VV. IONES,



Declaratio.

His most excellent grace
to be desired in all
both of Church and Commonwealth
unto his glory
Amen.

Your worship to be commanded

W. Jones.



THE MYSTERIE
OF CHRISTES
NATIVITIE.

GALAT. 4. 4.

*When the fulnesse of time was come, God sent his Sonne,
made of a woman, &c.*



*It is what solemnitie
wee are to celebrate
this day of Christs
Natiuitie (Deere-
ly beloved) the many
mysteries, and excel-
lencies therein con-
tained, may declare
vnto vs. Now is Hee
brought out of the
Virgins wombe, who*

*before lined eternally in the bosome of his Father:
Now is the Word, that made the world, borne an In-
fant*

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fant into the world, Now the *Ancient of dayes* is become a Child: Now *Judas* Lyon rowled himselfe to encounter the Red Dragon: Now *Jacobs* starre arose to be the Gentles light, and *Israels* glorie: Now the Bridegrome came out of his Chamber, to meet his Spouse: Now the Sonne of God became man, that men might be made the sonnes of God: Now Christ came out clothed with our flesh, that wee might bee inuested with his spirit: Now the Lord took on him the forme of a seruant, that we his seruants might be made partakers of his Lordship. These great blessings, doth this blessed day conueigh vnto vs. Wherefore to put you in mind, that your vnderstandings may be enlightned to know them; and your wils inclined to serue and praise God for them: I have made choice of this text, which being indeed the *Quintessence* of the Gospell, proposeth vnto vs concerning Christ his comming these circumstances. First, The time, *when the fulnesse of time, &c.* Secondly, The causes, *God sent his Sonne.* Thirdly, The manner, *made of a Woman &c.* Fourthly, The end, *that he might redeeme them, &c.* These points are best becomming this time: which when breifly & rudely I shall haue discoursed vpon, I wil then end, & comend yee to God.

When the fulnesse of time was come &c. Three things, measure all durations; *Aternitie, Immortalitie, Time.* *Aternitie* hath neyther beginning nor end; and is proper only to God, who is everlasting. *Immortalitie* hath beginning, but none end; and is proper to *Spirits*, as *Angels*, and mens soules, that once were

Christs Natiuitie.

were not, and yet now cannot die. *Time* hath both beginning and end, and is proper to all bodies, such as are possible and corruptible substances: of whom tis said, *omnia orta occidunt & aucta senescunt*: Now then Christ consisting of Godhead, soule, and bodie, hath these his three *Natures* limited by these three quantities, his Godhead by *Eternitie*, his soule by *Immortalitie*: and his bodie by *Time*. Thus in respect not of his *Diuinitie*, but his *Humanitie*, the maker of Time was made in time, and *Time* saith *Aristotle* is the measure of motion, but *Paul* here shewes vs more strange Philosophie, that it is the measure of the first Mouer it selfe. Would yee not wonder (*Deere Christians*) to heare that a *Gyants* foote should bee thrust into a childees shooe, or that the *Ocean Sea* should bee intruded into a bottle, and asmuch then may you maruell at this that God who is infinite, should bee borne in a time finite, but this doubt is thus dissolved three things, *vt supra &c.* And as our Apostle saith, *in the fulnesse thereof*. As places, so time haue their fulnesse and emptinesse, some places are emptie hauing nought but ayre in them, and some are replenished with siluer, with Gold, Pearle, Precious stones, and such like treasure, like so of times, some are void of strange accidents, and some are full of memorable and admirable occurrents, & in such a time was our Saviour borne, as the age of the world, the yeare, moneth, day, houre, these parts of time may impart vnto vs; *Touching the Worlds age*, know that it was

B

the

The Myserie of

the sixth. The first age was from *Adam* to *Noah*. The second from *Noah* to *Abraham*. The third from *Abraham* to *Dauid*. The fourth from *Dauid* to the transmigration from *Babylon*. The fifth from that to *Christs* *Natiuitie*, which fell in the sixth age : where note an excellent myserie, how correspondent Gods workes of our creation, and recreation are. As in the worlds sixth day God did make man : so in the worlds sixth age hee did redeeme man. In the worlds sixth day the first *Adam* was made, in whom wee are deformed: and in the worlds sixth age was the second *Adam* made, in whom wee are reformed. Here arise now two questions: why God louing man so wel, had not beene borne before or presently after mans fall, sith *Gratia ab officio quod mora tardat abest*. Secondly: why God minding to die for the sinnes of all the world, had not defer'd his comming to the end of the world. Six is a number neyther, diminute nor superabundant, but perfect, sith all his partes put together doe make the whole, as 1. 2. and 3. make six: so then in the number of perfection came the author of perfection. By sixe staires did men ascend to *Salomons* throne, and by six ages came the word to the throne of grace. These scruples thus I remove. First, for Christ to haue beene borne before *Adam* fel, had bin an action superfluous. For the end of his comming being (*vt inquit Euang.*) to seeke the lost Sheep of the house of *Israel*; to bind vp the broken hearted, to call sinners to repentance, and by it to saluation : what needed this seeker before man was lost? what needed this Phisition before man was sick? what needed this
Sa-

Christs Natiuitie.

Sauour before *Adam* was a sinner? Again for Christ to haue come presently after mans fall, had beene also very inconuenient. Man sinned by pride, and by pride was throwne into calamitie: from which if straightwayes hee should haue beene freed, perhaps the spirit of loftinesse and insolencie might haue come vpon him againe. God therefore sixe ages left him in his miserie, that he might know his fault, & knowing it, be humbled for the same. Farther it was meet, that as the entrance of a King into a Citie, so the comming of so worthie a person as the sonne of God into the World, should bee foreshewed by the predictions of such worthie messengers, as were the *Patriarckes* and *Prophets*; which could not haue beene had *Christ* beene borne in the time of *Adam*. As for the deferring of his birth to the end of the *World*, These reasons disproue it. First, the testimonie of *Abacuc. 3.* where it is said of God there, the workes of his mercie should bee reuiued *in medio annorum*. Againe why should Christ then bee borne on earth, when men shall haue no faith to beleue on him, no Charitie to loue him, and no Religion to worshipping him? But these things shall happen in the latter daies (as the *Euangelists* write) and therefore the *Worlds* end is a season, rather for Christ to come in iudgment to reuenge, then in mercie to redeeme. This for the age. Now for the year. It was the two and fortieth of the reign of *Augustus Caesar* the Roman Emperor: in whose time that *Christ* was borne, it was in regard of the manie resemblances that were between them. As *Augustus* was a temporal, so was *Christ* a Spiritual

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Monarch. As *Augustus* was the second Emperour of Rome, so was *Christ* the second person in *Trinitie*. As *Augustus* was so called, because hee did amplifie his Regiment, so *Christ* was so called, because he doth annoint vs his servants: as *Augustus* taxing the world receiued tribute from men and registred their names. So *Christ* preaching vnto the world had obedience yeelded vnto him, and noted such as serued him in the Booke of life. As *Augustus* hauing vanquished his enemies; planted peace among his people (for in his dayes the Temple of *Ianus* was shut, that else in the time of warre was wont euer to bee open) so *Christ* hauing subdued his foes, Death and the Deuill, placed quietnesse in the conscience of his Childre, who before were distressed with many troubles; from the age and the yeare, come we to the Month and the Day. *Christ* was borne on the five and twentieth day of *December*, then being the shortest day of the yeare and *Sunday*: as both by the fathers is testified, and by calculation may be proued, wherof note with me eyther the reasons or mystries. *December* is the tenth moneth and in it was he borne, that came to make satisfaction for our transgression of his Fathers ten Commandements. *December* concludes the old yeare, and giues way to a new, and *Christ* now born gaue an end to the old Ceremonies of the Law, and brought in, in steed thereof the new ordinances of grace. Ten degrees went the Sunne backward to signifie to sicke *Ezechiah* that he should not die, and

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ten moneths in assuming our flesh did *Christ* goe back
as it were for his Majestie to assure vs of his mercie,
the number often is the first Article: compound of
the figure, 1. and a cipher 0. and in the tenth moneth
was he borne, whose person did consist of the figure
of his *Diuinitie*, and the cipher of his *humanitie*. In
the shortest day is the *Sunne* in his greatest and lowest
South declination, and when was the sonne of God
euer farther from the *Aequinoction* of his glorie and
lower in basenesse, then when hee came out into the
world, clothed with our flesh. In the shortest day the
Sunne is said to be in his Tropick, that is so called of
the Greek word *τροπή* to turne, & when so graciously
as now in his birth did the sonne of God turne vnto
vs, saith *Iohn Baptist of Christ*, *Ioh. 3. me oportet minui il-* *Ioh. 3. 30.*
lum autem crescere, verified as in their qualities of dig-
nitie and estimation: So also in the times of their Na-
tiuities. *Iohn Baptist* was borne the longest day of the
yeare, and therefore being at the highest his time must
decrease: and *Christ* was borne in the shortest, and
therefore being at the lowest, his time must needs en-
crease. In the shortest Day, the *Sunne* beginnes that re-
turne, that turnes joy and comfort to living thinges,
and *Christ* now put his first foot in that race, that
yeelds blessednesse and happinesse to all Christians:
in the shortest day, the cold is greatest, and therefore
sayth *Bernard*, *Christ* chose a time troublesome to his
flesh, that we should learne not to pamper ours: on a
Sunday, God the Father in his power beganne the
world,

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world: and now on a *Sunday*, God the sonne in his mercie began to redeeme the world. *Sunday* was first made before any other time: and *Christ* thereon borne, is called the first begotten of al Creatures. On *Sunday* God made the light, and on *Sunday* now produced was he, that is the true light, lightning euery one that comes into the world, as also all those that sit in darknesse & the shadow of death. To proceed yet to more particulars. What part of the day? & what houre was *Christ* borne in? *Luc. 2* records that it was in the night, when the Shepheards were watching their flockes, that though the Angell said to them, there is borne this day to ye a *Sauour*, ye are to vnderstand it spoken not of the artificiall day, that holds from *Sun* to *Sun*, but of the naturall day that containes the space of foure and twentie houres. Thus in the time of darknesse was hee borne, that came to dissolue the power of darknesse; shining in darknesse, when the darknesse could not comprehend him. *Nox* is so called *anocendo*, because if men then walke without light, they may easily hurt themselues: and now as a Physition in the best opportunitie came the great helper in the time of hurting; to shew that hee was stronger then the deuil. *Christ* vanquished the deuil in his own time, the Prince of the night, in the night. Farther, touching the houre, if we may beleue *Cardanus* that great Physition & Astronomer, it was about tenne of the clock, and fifteene minutes. For he in his Comment vpon *Ptolemies* quadripartite, treating *Christ*s Natiuitie, makes the eleuenth degree of *Virgo*

Luc. 2.8.11.

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to ascend in *prima domo*, which could not bee but at that time. The Fathers write that hee was borne at midnight, as *Hierom*, and *Bernard*: which of these opinions is truest, I will not decide. Mysteries there are in both of them. If *Cardan* say true, then it fitly fell out, that the Sonne of a Virgin was borne when the heavenly figure *Virgo* did ascend. If the Fathers say true, then opportunately came he in *medio noctis*, that was to be the *medium* betweene God and man. The greatest obscuritie is at midnight; and then therefore was produced the greatest light; hee that was the brightness of his fathers glorie. Thus then in the sixth age of the World, in the two and fortieth yeere of *Augustus Caesars* Reigne, in the moneth of *December*, in the five and twentieth and shortest day, on *Sunday*, betweene ten and twelue at night, was our blessed *Sauour* blessedly born. Which season Saint Paul calls *the fulnesse of time*, as because each part thereof, as ye see, is full of mysteries, so by reason of other occasions that I am now to acquaint you with. And first, this *then*. Whatsoeuer God eyther promised, or the Patriarckes and Prophets eyther in their speeches foreshewed, in their actions prefigured, or affections desired: that all at this time is fully fulfilled. Now accomplished are Gods promises made to *Eue*, that her seed should bruiſe the Serpents head. *Gen. 3. 20.* *Abraham* *Gen. 3.* that in his seed all Nations of the earth should bee blest. *Gen. 22.* to *David* that of the fruit of his loynes, hee would *Gen. 22.* set one on his seat that should rule as a King for euer. *Psal. 132.* Now fulfilled are the Predictions of the Patriarckes *Psa. 132.*

and

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Gen. 49.

Deut. 18.

Num. 24.

Esa. 7.

Mich. 5.

Dan. 9.

and Prophets; of Iacob when he said. Gen. 49. the Scepter shall not be taken from the Tribe of Iuda, and a Captaine from his thigh, till he come, that is to be sent, and hee shall be the expectation of Nations. Of Moses when he said Deut. 18. A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, among your brethren, him shall ye heare. Of Balam, when he said, Numb. 24. a starre shall rise from Iacob; and a staffe from Israel, that shall strike the Moabites. Of Esay, when he said, that a Virgin should beare a sonne, and call his name Emanuel. Es. 7. Of Michas: when he said, Mich. 5. And thou Bethleem Ephrata, art but a little one in respect of thousands in Iuda: and yet there shall come forth of thee one, that shall be the ruler of Israel, and his coming forth is from the beginning, and from the days of Eternitie. Of Daniel, when he said Dan. 9. that after certaine weekes of yeares expired the holy of balyes should be annointed. Now fulfilled are the Figures of the Patriarks and Prophets Actions: Now Abraham came a stranger into Egypt: When Christ came as a Pilgrime; where coming amongst his owne, his owne received him not. Now Moses was put into a Basket. Joseph throwne into the pit, Hieremy into the Dungeon. Daniel into the Lyons Denne, when Christ was sent into this wretched World, a place of perplexities: Now the stone was cut from the Mountaine without hands, when Christ was borne of his mortall Mother, neuer being begotten by mortall father: Now Aarons rod did bud and beare Almonds, when a spotlesse Virgin did produce a Child: Now a woman did com-

How fulfilled are the Predictions of the Patriarks and Prophets

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pass a man, when hee was contained in a womans womb, that doth himselfe cōprehend heauen & earth: Now a Riuer flowed to water *Paradise*, when *Christ* was borne, with his blood to wash away the sinnes of the world: Now the Mountaines did distil sweetnes, when Heauen did let God to descend on earth: Now *Salomon* made himselfe a Throne of Iuorie, when *Christ* made himselfe a bodie of flesh in the Virgins wombe: Now the *Dove* came from *Noahs* Arke, when the sonne of God came from the bosome of his Father: Now the bush burned and was not consumed, when a Virgine brought forth a Son, and was not corrupted: mercy and truth met together, when *Christs* Diuinitie and Humanitie met in one person, to work our redemption. Now the *Sunne* was couered with a Cloud, when God clothed himselfe with our flesh. Againe now fulfilled are the desires of the Patriarches and Prophets. *Abraham* tooke great joy of this Day, and now he saw it *Ioh. 8. Expectabo salutare tuum* ^{Ioh. 8.} saith *Jacob. Gen. 49. I will wait for thy saluation, O Lord* ^{Gen. 49.} and now behold his expectation satisfied. *David* cried out, *Psal. 48. ostende nobis domine misericordiam tuam*, ^{Pf. 48.} and now he might say as in *Psal. 47. suscepimus Deus* ^{Pf. 47.} *misericordiam tuam in medio templi.* Begge no longer *Moses* to say to God as it is *Deu. 18. mitte obsecro quem* ^{Deu. 18.} *missurus es*; for now is he come amongst vs. Crie not longer out *Esay* as it is. *Esa. 64. Vtinam disrumperes ca-* ^{Esa. 64.} *los & descenderes, O that thou wouldst cleaue the Hea-* *uens and come downe,* for this day came hee out of a

C

Virgins

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Virgins wombe. The summe of this is this: Now are Gods promises, the *Patriarches and Prophets predictions, actions, and affections*, fulfilled. And therefore most excellently is it termed *the fulnesse of time*. Againe, now was *the fulnesse of Gods Communication* when he came to giue vs himselfe in his sonnes flesh; wherein as it is. *Col. 2. dwelt the fulnesse of the Godhead bodily*. Now was the fulnesse of mans *Redemption*, when a *Sauour* was borne to begin the gracious work therof in preserving vs, by his merits, from sin, death, hell, and the Devill: Now was the fulnesse of graces promotion, *We taking them out of his fulnes* as *Ioh. saith*. And who can denie this to be *the fulnesse of time*? To this let me adde, that the world was now full of miracles: Now the Angels sang in heauen and comforted shepheards on earth: Now a strange starre guided the wisemen to *Christ*: Now a wel-spring in *Rome* did runne with Oyle: Now three Sunnes appeared, shining first seuerally, and then joyntly: Now *Augustus* his *aturnum palatium*, that was prophesied neuer to fall before a Virgin did beare a child, was ruinated to the ground: Now *Augustus*, asking one of the *Sy-bils* whether there were any where a greater person then himselfe, saw in the *Sunne* a Virgin giuing an Infant sucke, to whom afterwards hee dedicated an Altar, and called it, *Aram Celi*; the Altar of Heauen. And thus yee see it proued, that it was *the fulnesse of time*, when he, that as *S. Ioh. saith*, full of grace & truth was borne amongst vs. *The Iewes expect yet a Messias*

Col. 2.

Ioh. 1. 16.

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to come: denying *Iesus* whom wee belecue on,
to bee the Worlds *Sauour*. And the *Turkes*
dare to compare him with their *Mahomet*. But
this doctrine of *the fulnesse of time*, wherein *Christ*
was born, doth most plainly and forcibly confute
them. For sith all the promises and mercies of
God; sith the prophesies, figures, and desires of
our famous forefathers, and manie admirable
Miracles, met in the time of *Christs Natiuitie*;
and that neuer *Mahomet* had the like; nor any
Creature can haue the like: wee are fully to bee
resolved, by this *fulnesse of time*, the true *Messias*
to bee borne. I could spend more time in dis-
coursing vpon this time, but that greater mat-
ters, viz. *The causes of Christs birth* doe now
offer themselves vnto mee in these wordes, *God*
sent his sonne: Where the Efficient cause is *God*;
the formall cause *his sending*; and the materiall
cause *his Sonne Christ* himselfe: *God sent*. Who?
the Father, the Sonne, or the Holy Ghost?
Surely all three of them. For know, that
opera Trinitatis sunt in-diuisa: and, vnlesse in per-
sonall respects, euermore in Essentiall actions,
what one doth they all doe; as now in this worke
of *Christs birth*, the whole *Trinitie* shewed
their industrie. *The Father sent mee saith Christ*, *Ioh.8.42.5.36.*
Ioh.13.20. Here the Father labours. *I went out* ^{37.}
from the Father and came into the World: Here is ^{Rom.8.32.}
the labour of the Sonne. *The Holy Ghost shall come* ^{Ioh.16.18.}

The Myserie of

Luc. I. 35.

upon thee quoth the Angell *Gabriel* to the blessed *Virgin*, when she was to conceive *Christ*: this is the labour of the Holy Ghost. Thus the three persons, being one *GOD*, had each of them their action in *CHRISTS* Incarnation; and that most fitly: sith it being a worke of great power, Wisdome, and goodnes, it was requisite that the Father with his power, the Sonne with his Wisdome, and the Holie Ghost with his Goodnesse, should accomplish it. What more powerfull a thing, then to joyne two such extremely distant Natures as the Creatour and the Creature together! It is *GODS* especiall power in compound bodies, to joyne the foure Elements together; it is greater power to joyne our bodie to our created spirits, that is to say, our soules. But to joyne all these to the increated spirit, God; this is a might above all measure.

Againe what more wise thing, then that to the perfection and complement of the whole; the beginning and the end of a worke should hang together. And now note this myserie. The Word was the beginning of the *V*World: for by it *GOD* made the World; and *Adam* was the last Creature of the *V*World. The Word then becomming Man, the first and the last, that is to say *GOD* and man, were vnited together. Againe what greater goodnesse can be,

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bee; then that the Creatour should communicate himselfe to the Creatures? It is his great kindnesse, that God giues himselfe to his Creatures by his essence, presence, and power: it is his greater kindnes that he giues himselfe to good men by his grace: but that hee should giue himselfe to our nature, by Vnion with it, that is to say, by assuming our Humanitie into his Diuinitie; this surmounts all fauour that may bee said or thought vpon. Thus I say the Fathers power, the Sonnes wisdom, and the Holy Ghosts goodnesse, were all *Actors* in clothing *Christ* with our flesh. To the doing whereof what moued them? our merits? no; (*Brethren*) but their mercies according to that of *Iob. 2.* *God so loued the World,* *Iob. 3. 16.* *that he sent his sonne, &c.* Loue is manifested three wayes: *Dono, passione, opere*, in giuing, suffering, and working. The Father shewed his loue, when he gaue vs his Sonne: the Sonne shewed his loue, when hee suffered Death for our sinnes; and the Holy Ghost shewes his loue, in setting vs forward in good workes. Thus the manifestation of the blessed Trinities power, wisdom, goodnesse, and mercie, are as it were the foure wheelles, vpon which the Charriot of Gods providence brought *Christ* into this world: Who came as sent, *God sent* sayth my text. Heere is a doubt worthie to be discusst. *Christ* was neuer separated from God his Father. For when *Saint Iohn* saw him vpon earth,

C 3;

The Myserie of

Ioh. 1. 18.

Ioh. 3. 13.

Ioh. 1. 3.

earth, hee yet acknowledged him to bee in the
bosome of his Father secundum id 1. cap. unigeni-
tum qui est in sinu patris, &c. as also that hee was
in Heauen, *secundum id tertio capite, nemo ascendit,*
&c. qui est in caelo; yea that hee was in the world
before his birth, *sith hee made the World; as it is*
cap. 1. and how then may it be said, that God sent
him, when hee neuer went from him? An Inter-
pretation shall make euident all this. *Missio,* saith
Thomas Aquinas commenting vpon this place, *fuit*
assumptio Carnis, non depositio maiestatis: Christ
left not to bee God, when hee became man; but
tooke more vnto his Godhead when hee became
man, viz. our Humanitie into his Diuinitie: that
through our visible nature assumed, he might ac-
quaint vs with his inuisible exceelencies, which els
could neuer haue beene known of vs. As the Sun
shining in his perfit brightnes, can not be looked
vpon; but in a Cloud or mist, hauing his beames
refracted, may bee beheld: so God, in his infinite
and incomprehensible essence, being considered
of vs, cannot be knowne of vs, for he is too power-
ful an object for our weake vnderstanding; but in
our Nature, by his sonne assumed, hauing his
glorie and Majestie contracted, wee may take a
full view of him. And thus Christ his incarnating
is his proper sending. But why sent God his sonne
the second person in *Trinitie*? Wherefore had not
the Father, and the Holy Ghost, come to be man
af-

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aswel as the Sonne? (*Brethren*) this is a high point in Diuinitie, requiring iudiciall and attentive cares: which if yee lend mee, thus then I resolve yee.

Truely there wanted no power in any of those persons to performe this; for they are all Omnipotent, and able to doe what soeuer pleaseth them. But yet why the sonne did it rather then the rest; great reasons are to bee alleaged. First, It was meete that by what instruments God made the World, by the same he should repaire the World: But God by his sonne made the World, as it is *Heb. 1.* and therefore as it is *2. Cor. 5.* well was God in Christ, by whom hee reconciled the World. Secondly, It was fit that hee who was the sonne in the *Diuinitie*, should also bee the sonne in *Humanitie*: least if the Father or the Holy Ghost had bin the sonnes of men, they had then beene temporall sonnes to the Eternall sonne. Thirdly, the Father is of himselfe alone, and the Sonne is of the Father. Now then more seemely it is that he be sent, who is of another, then he that is of himselfe. Fourthly, the Sonne was sent to be man, that wee might know how the father did loue man in sending so precious a thing to redeeme man therby, thus to strengthen our languishing hope, that sith God thought not his Sonne too good for vs, how can wee doubt but that hee will bestow all other things on vs what.

1.
2.

1.

Heb. 1.

2. Cor. 5.

2.

3.

4.

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5.
Rom. 8. 29.

whatsoever wee begge of him? Fifthly, *G O D* hath predestinated vs laith Saint Paul Romans 8. to bee conformable to the Image of his sonne: that therefore had hee not sent his Sonne, how could wee bee like to his Sonne? had not he come that was the Naturall sonne; wee should neuer haue beene adopted sonnes. The

6.

sonne of God therefore was made the sonne of man, that we sonnes of men might bee made the sonnes of God. Sixtly, God the sonne is the middle person betweene God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, and therefore was fittest to bee sent to bee the mediator betwene God and man. Se-

7.

uently, He that was to worke our redemption was to be an intercessor and supplicator to God for vs. But these properties are more proper to a sonne, then a Father: for a sonne is to intreat the Father, and not the Father the sonne. And therefore did God best to send his sonne. Last of all, the Mediator betweene God and man was to pacifie, so to teach and guide man to be obedient vnto God. Now then *Christ being the word of God and wisdom of God*, as Saint Iohn and Saint Paul affirme: meetest was hee, the sonne, to be mans Teacher and Counsailor. Why God sent his Sonne see the Reasons. Now behold wee in what manner he sent him: the third thing I am to speak of. It is said *made of a woman and made vnder the law*. What is writtē before in my text of him, that

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that in the fulnesse of time God sent him, pointest to his Diuinitie, and his glorie: but that now Hee is made of a Woman and under the Law, this shewes his Humanitie and Humilitie: How the two Natures Godhead and Manhood were vnited together in the vnitie of his person. Paul ^{1.Tim.3.} 1.Tim.3. talkes of a great mysterie of pietie, How God was manifested in the flesh, iustified in the spirit, was seene of Angels, was preached to the Gentiles, beleiued on in the World, and assumed into glorie. And heere behold this production of God, to be made of a woman, is the beginning of it; opening as it were the doore to the other most admirable actions. But what a strange thing is this, that the maker of the World should thus bee made of a woman: and that the Creatour should haue his being from a Creature. This rightly to conceiue, ye are to note this. Christ in respect of his Godhead, was increated; in respect of his soule he was created; and in respect of his bodie he was made of a woman. As we Christians are borne, first, naturally of our Parents, and afterwards are born spiritually of the Holy Ghost: So Christ beeing God, was begotten naturally of God; and now being man, was made temporally of a woman. *Verbum caro factum est, &c.* saith Saint Iohn cap. 1. Paul affirmeth 2.Tim.2. that he came of the seed of ^{2.Tim.2.} David, and Heb.2. that nowhere hee tooke on him the ^{Heb.2.} Angels, but the seed of Abraham tooke he on him,

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and

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and all this by being made of a woman. *Of a Woman?* yee will say what reason had God to effect so strange an action: I will tell yee; to aduance his glorie, and doe vs the more good. O how kind did God shew himselfe in taking vpon him our fraile nature! Hee might haue come to vs as he did to *Moses* and the *Israelites* on Mount *Sinay* in thundering, lightning, fire, and smoake: hee might haue come to vs in the substance of an *Angell* assumed, but yet because hee loued man, to man he came in the estate of man. O how just did God shew himselfe to bee made of a Woman! The Deuill before had conquered all flesh in the first *Adam*: and now the second *Adam* took flesh in it to subdue the Deuill. O how wise did God herein shew himselfe, that when one man by sinne had displeased him, another man by his righteousnesse should pacifie him! I meane *Iesus*, who being God, *therefore became man to be the mediator betweene God and man*: Which office no other Creature neyther man nor *Angell* could possibly haue executed, sith infinite being the Maiestie of him that by sinne was offended, by no person but him that is of infinite goodnesse it could be appeased. *Christ* therefore tooke God and man into the vnitie of his person to reconcile God and man into the vnitie of affection. These & such like inuisible excellencies of kindnesse, Iustice, Wisdome, to make visible vnto vs,
he

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he took on him our visible nature in mercie descending to vs; sith wee in might could not ascend to him. Secondly, *Christus factus est, &c.* As for the promotion of his owne glorie, so for the procurement of our good, in many things to help vs; to instruct our faith which could not but beleeue, when she heard God himselfe to speake; to comfort our hope which could not but bee cheered, when she saw God vnited to our nature; to kindle our charitie, that could not but loue God; Mensibly perceiuing how God loued man; to draw our actions to vertue, that could not but imitate God, giuing himselfe for an example; and to make vs partakers of his Diuinitie, that as God was the sonne of man, so wee men should bee made the sonnes of God. Againe, *Christus factus est, &c.* to remoue many cuils from vs, that the deuill the author of sin, though hee were an Angell should not be preferred before vs; that man considering the dignitie of his nature, how it is in vnion with God, should not spot it with sinne, that our presumption with the thought of Christs merites, our pride with the remembrance of his humilitie, and the feare of death and hell with the consideration of his person, might bee daunted and abated. Further, *Dei filius factus est, &c.* to verifie his Intarnation; *Valentine* held Christ to haue brought his body with him from heauen; and to haue taken no flesh from his Mother. *Marcion,*

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Apelles, Cerdonius, and *Manes*, affirmed Christ to haue but a phantastical body, such as Angels and spirits assume. The *Turkes* and *Moores* imagine Christ to bee the breath of God, whom because God saw that the Iewes would crucifie, he therefore suffered Christ to delude their eyes, in seeming to doe and suffer what hee did not. But these heresies are notably confuted in this; *That he was made of a woman*. For if a woman were his true Mother, bearing him ten Monethes in her wombe, bringing him forth & giuing him sucke: then vndoubtedly he was a true man, and had a true, naturall, and not a celestiall and phantastical body. Last of all, *Christ was made of a Woman*; to grace women kind with his birth, that before had disgraced it selfe with the deuils temptation. A woman in Paradise, was a meane to make man a sinner; and a woman in *Bethlem* was an instrument to bring forth to man a Saviour. Wherefore an ancient Father saith thus; Because the male-kind is more noble, Christ would be a man: and yet that woman should not bee contemned, hee was borne of a woman. But why doth *Paul* here name so expressely a woman, and not mention a man? Because indeede man had no action in Christs generation: For as our Saviour being God had a Father, & no mother: So being man he had a Mother, but no Father. Where note, that mankind is brought forth foure kind of wayes. *Adam*
was

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was made without man or woman: *Eue* was made of a man without a woman: We are made of men and women; and Christ was made of a woman without a man. If yee aske of what woman? I answered yee, *Marie* the Virgine, *Whom all generations doe call blessed.* Of her bloud or seede, *LUC. I. 48.* by the working of the Holy Ghost was Christ made. O what strange birth was this, that a virgin was the Mother, and God the Sonne! saith *Bernard*. It became not God to haue any Mother but a maiden: and it becomed a maide to haue no sonne but God.

Wonders are in this mother, and in this sonne. This mother was sanctified with the fulnesse of grace, with the ouer-shadowing of the Holy Ghost, and the inhabitation of the Sonne of God. Shee was, saith *Saint Bernard*, *Sine pudore fecunda, sine grauiamine gruida, sine dolore puerpera.* By bearing Christ, shee was the starre that gaue light to the Sunne, the branch that bare the Vine, the Riuer that yeelded the fountaine, the daughter that brought forth her Father, the creature that gaue being to the Creatour: shee was I say the Mother of her Father, and the daughter of her Sonne, yonger then her birth, lesser then what shee contained, a maiden, and a Mother, to haue a Sonne with God the Father: whereas Virgines were cursed for barrennesse, and wiues for bringing forth with sorrow, *Marie* was free from ei-

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ther of these: For being a Virgine shee was fruitfull, and bringing forth child shee felt no paines. As the Sunne shines through glasse and corrupts it not: So God came made of a Virgine without breach of her chastitie. And because shee conceived without sinne, shee was therefore deliuered without paines. Aganie, wonders are in this Sonne. In the instant of his conception, and now by succession of time he was a perfect man in soule and body, voide of sinne and full of grace. Hee had a father in heauen, and a mother on earth, but yet a father without a mother, and a mother without a father. Further by being *made of a woman*, of a Lord he became a seruant, of eternall he was made temporall, of infinite he became an infant, of high he became low, of incomprehensible locall, of intelligible, sensible: borne hee was in a womans wombe, himselfe bearing the World, and suck he did at a maidens breasts, himselfe giuing food to all things. Thus *of a woman was Christ made*, and not onely so, but also *Vnder the Law*: *made of a woman* is the humilitie of his birth, *made vnder the Law* is the humilitie of his life: in birth, in life, and in manie other thinges crying out vnto vs, that we would learne of him, to bee humble and meeke. Among the Iewes diuers lawes were in vse in Christs time, the *Morall*, *Ceremoniall*, *Iudiciall*, and vnder all these our *Sauiovr* was made. Yee will object how can this bee? They saith

Paul

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Paul) Gal. 5. *that are led by the Spirit, are not vnder Gal. 5. 18.*
the Law: but *Christ* was led by the Spirit, and was
full of the Spirit, and therefore the law had nought
to doe with him. For answere accept this. To
be vnder the Law carrieth a double sense; to bee
vnder eyther the obseruance of the Law, or the
oppression of the Law. Now then *Christ* was vn-
der the obseruance of the Law. For he was cir-
cumcised the eight day, presented afterwarde
in the Temple, and did those things that the law
required: but not vnder the oppression of the
Law, so as the breach thereof did any way bur-
den him; sith hee was harmelesse and innocent.
And yet in respect of our sinnes, the guilt wherof
in mercie he vndertooke, he was vnder the lawes
oppression. Also for the punishment due to our
offences, the Law inflicted on him; it accused
him, and condemned him before the Tribunall
of God of all the sinnes of the World; it made
his bodie sweat water and bloud, it made his
soule heauie to the death; and on the Crosse so
perplexed his whole humanitie that he cried out,
My God my God, why hast thou forsaken me. Thus
the blessed maker of all things wastwise now
made. First, *Of a Woman*, to entertaine our Na-
ture, and secondly, *Vnder the Law*, to sustaine our
sinnes. And all this to what end? It followes in
the end of my Text, which shewes the end why
Christ came, &c. *To redeeme those that were vnder*
the

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the Law, that we might receiue the adoption of sonnes. See (*Deere Christians*) how proportionable Gods meanes are to the effecting of his purposes! *Christ* was made *under the Law* to redeeme vs from the Law, and was made *the sonne of a Woman*, that we might receiue *the adoptiō to be the sons of God*. Two generall and singular blessings containing all that *Christ* hath done for vs, are heere conueighed vnto vs: Redemption, and Exaltation, Freedome, and Aduancement: Redemption and freedome to be exempted from the Law; and Exaltation and Aduancement to haue the adoption to bee Gods sonnes. The Law, before *Christ* came, did *dominari*, as *S. Paul* saith: playing the Tyrant amongst men, as *Pharao* did among the *Israelites*; it stil cried out, keep the Commandement; with infinite curses to those that eyther would not, or could not keep every jot of it. It imposed vpon men an insupportable burden, it aggravated sinne, it terrified the conscience, and as it is *2. Cor. 2.* *it was the administration of death and damnation*. Now then *Christ* made *under the Law*, did free men from this Law; and how but by his fulfilling of it for vs? His humilitie satisfied the Law for our pride, his fasting for our gluttonie, his Chastitie for our wantonnesse, his mildnesse for our wrath, his kindnesse for our enuie, his obedience for our negligence, his excellencies for our infirmities: that when the Law gaping so for righteousness,

2. Cor. 2.

Christ Natiuitie.

as a Lyon for his prey, having the morsell of *Christ*, perfection and holinesse, throwne into her mouth, she was presently satisfied and appeased, and vpon that doth feed yet at this houre, which otherwise could not be contented with anie thing which poore man could yeeld vnto her. Againe, as before *Christ* came, wee were *bondslaves vnder the Law*: So were we Bastards in nature, degenerated from that Holinesse and righteousnes wherein we were created, and thereby deprived of our Heauenly inheritance. And now our Saviour by being *made of a Woman*, doth make vs to be true *sonnes* againe; for hee by clothing himselfe with our nature becomming *our brother*, as *Paul* termes him *primogenit^{us} inter multos fratres*, by *Rom. 8.* a consequent drawes vs in to be the *sonnes* of his father; so giuing vs of his spirit to be the children of God, as hee tooke of our flesh to be the sonne of man: he by our flesh counted the Virgin his Mother, and we by his spirit (as the *Apottle* sayth) *crie Abba Father*. Thus not onely to make vs freemen, but also *sonnes*; the sonne of God came. The summe of this point is briefly this, *Christ* came as *Manna* from Heauen to feede vs being hungrie, as the cluster of Grapes out of the Vineyard, to satisfie vs being thirstie, as Oyle powred out to cure vs being wounded. Hee came as our head, that giues vs spiritual sense and motion; as our Mediatour, that being God and man best reconciles God and man; as our foundati-

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on which we build our faith; as our doore giuing passage to *Paradise*; as our Shepheard feeding vs; our sacrifice expiating vs; our Priest praying for vs; as our way in example, life in reward. Hee came as a man to make vs gods, as a seruant to make vs Lords, to earth to lift vs vp to Heauen. He came mortall to make vs immortall, poore to make vs rich, and base to make vs glorious. In a word, *He that was the bread* was hungrie that we might be fed: he that was *the fountaine* was dry, that wee might be satisfied. Hee that was joy was sad, that we might be comforted; and he that was *the way*, was wearied, that we might be directed to heauen. And thus haue yee heard the circumstances of *Christ* his comming: the Time, Causes, Manner, End. The Doctrine wherof, for a conclusion, let vs put to these vses. First, *Sith in the fulnesse of time* came he that was full of grace and truth, let vs also fulfill our times that wee spend in godly labours: In time of prayer, deuout; in time of preaching, attentive; in time of prosperitie bountifull; in time of pouertrie, patient; in time of feasting, temperate; in all times vertuous and honest, and then no time shal passe emptie of durie. Next, *sith God sent his Sonne*, Let vs acknowledge the benefit hereof; how much we are bound to the Lord, that so great a person as hee would bestow so great a gift on vs most vnworthie Creatures, and withall provide

Christis Natiuitie.

our hearts to haue such roomes in them, as may be fit to enteraine so honourable a guest thus sent vnto vs: let our repentance sweep cleane the chambers of our soules, let a good conscience be his bedding, and let graces and vertues be the ornaments of his lodging. Next sith he was *made of a Woman*, and *under the Law*, let vs learne that sith he hath so dignified our nature, as with it to cloth himselfe, to haue a care that wee spot it not or defile it with sinne. A poore maide married to a King, ought to forget her base bringing vp, and to forgoe her clownish qualities: and our Nature married to God must vnloose the filthie actions of her corrupt generation, and *put on the new man*, to be like to *Christ*. Further sith *under the Law*, let vs remember what a heauie burden hee tooke on him to ease our shoulders, and so be the more willing to beare any crosse that he shall lay vpon vs. Finally, sith hee hath redeemed vs from the Law, and makes vs *adopted sonnes*: let vs carrie our selues as men that haue Christian libertie, scourging *Sinne*, *Death*, *Hell*, and the *Devill*; that with the chaines of slavish feare would stil keep vs captiue. Last of all, sith we are *his sonnes by adoption*, let vs doe our dutie to our Heauenly Father: Let vs loue, feare, and serue him with all our hearts soules and strength: let vs bee taught with his precepts, let vs be guided with his counsailes, alured with his promises, terrified with his threatenings,

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things, but especially be wonne with his merces.
Then his gracions sonnes will bee reward vs with
the glorious inheriance of his Heavenly
Kingdome. *To the which place hee*
that was borne for vs, bring vs.

Amen.

And hee hath loosed our nature, as with it to
close him to have more that wee spore not
ordain it with him. A poore maide married to
a King ought to forget her pale bringing up.

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